



**INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS
CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT REPORT
2006-07**

**Prepared by
Office of Institutional Planning, Research & Assessment**

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Academic year 2006-07 marked a major transition in the way that Athens State University conducts its institutional planning, research, and assessment activities. Guided by its commitment to continuous improvement of all academic programs, administrative, and support units, and as a follow-up to recommendations and suggestions from SACS (2000), ASU has engaged in significant efforts to strengthen its institutional planning, research and assessment capabilities.

During academic years 2004 and 2005, there were significant improvements in institutional data collection functions (institutional research). The appointment of a Coordinator of Institutional Research, reporting to the Vice President of Academic Affairs as opposed to Information Technology (IT), formerly MIS, greatly facilitated the collection, storage, retrieval and dissemination of institutional information. In addition, the University made considerable investment in expanding IT capabilities to accommodate increasing demand for and complexity of uses of information in both academic and administrative functions.

To further the improvement process, in 2006-07 a Coordinator of Institutional Assessment was hired. At this time, a comprehensive internal analysis of all planning, research and assessment (evaluation) activities was conducted. Findings from this analysis resulted in the consolidation of strategic planning, research, and assessment functions under the Office of Institutional Planning, Research, and Assessment (OIPRA), previously Institutional Research. This consolidation of functions ensures a better alignment of processes, timelines, and documentation of institutional effectiveness to the multiple reporting and format requirements from state and federal regulatory agencies and national and regional accrediting organizations.

Immediately upon its reorganization, OIPRA began the development and implementation of a systematic process to help direct and coordinate the collection and use of assessment data throughout the University, and to enhance tracking and reporting of information to better document its actual use in program management and institutional strategic planning.

Using 2006-07 as the planning year, OIPRA, in coordination with all academic and administrative units throughout the University, formulated a series of standards, procedures, and timetables to guide the measurement and documentation of institutional effectiveness starting in 2007-08 and every year thereafter. Through the reliance on standardized though flexible processes, this new system focuses on enhancing the efficiency of internal evaluation processes to guide continuous improvement to institutional effectiveness.

A more standardized process incorporates economies of scale in the decision-making process and lays the foundation for a new “culture of assessment” throughout the University. Furthermore, the new system improves the quality and comparability of institutional data and facilitates the documentation of compliance with accreditation standards.

In spite of the progress made throughout 2006-07, additional improvements are needed particularly in the areas of institutional research and strategic planning.

Currently, institutional research does not initiate analytical studies needed for strategic planning. This weakness extends to the analysis of both internal and external data needed to generate crucial institutional effectiveness metrics on which to make decisions at all levels of the University.

Two other challenges, currently outside the control of the institutional research function, further complicate this matter. Lines of responsibility for “data ownership”, and the consistent use of Banner to centrally store institutional data, must be addressed either through written policy or procedure. Increased efficiencies can be achieved with a stricter and consistent policy in the use of Banner, given the system’s available capabilities that are already paid for but not being fully used.

In addition to the impact of the current limited scope of institutional research to generate data for decision-making, the strategic planning process is not fully aligned with the evaluation (assessment) process. Consequently, performance metrics stipulated in two of the three major planning documents, the 5-Year Long Range Plans (LRP) and the annual Short Range Plan (SRP), do not reflect target outcomes consistent with the institutional effectiveness matrix resulting from the new systematic assessment process to be implemented during the 2007-08. The alignment of the planning and evaluation functions is a major priority for OIPRA and the Planning Council in the coming year.

Other challenges to the strategic planning process include the multiple planning and reporting timeframes and data requirements imposed by external regulatory agencies. Currently, the Long Range Plan, the Institutional Management Plan (IMP), and the *SMART Alabama Plan* are based on different planning periods and data requirements.

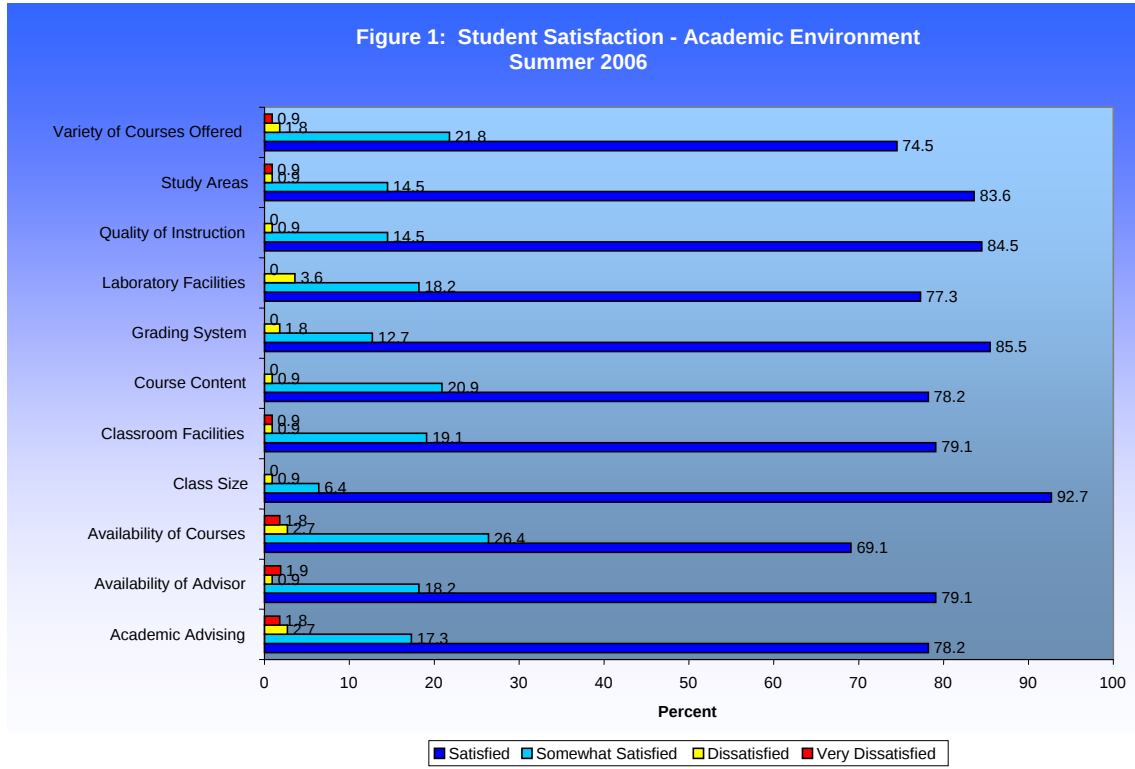
Furthermore, the current practice of moving the 5-year period annually (adding an extra year) to the five-year plan is confusing and reduces proper focus. Rather than being the roadmap for decision-making regarding the institutional priorities for the next 5 years, the document becomes a “moving target” making it difficult to focus, budget, and follow through. OIPRA will present its recommendations to the Planning Council for their consideration and review during the next planning period.

Further improvements can be expected during the 2007-08 and 2008-09 planning periods as the University moves forward with the implementation of systematic components of planning, research, and assessment.

II. ENHANCEMENTS TO INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS (2006-07)

A. Academic Programs and Support

1. Academic Environment and Student Satisfaction¹



Note: Student Satisfaction data reported in the 2006-07 *Institutional Management Plan Update* is based on reporting requirements of selective data from the Alabama College System. Consequently, some data elements are not included. The data reported above includes all elements measured through the Graduating Senior Exit Survey conducted in Summer 2006-07, the first term, where results have been reported in the new format required by the assessment system. The 2007-08 Institutional Effectiveness: Continuous Improvement Report will use results from the Spring Term, for a larger student representation.

¹ Student satisfaction percentage based on 110 student respondents to the Summer 2006 Graduating Senior Exit Survey.

2. Program Reviews (2006-07)

a. College of Arts & Sciences (Selected Programs)

The Department of Government and Public Affairs² delivered the academic programs for three majors in recent years: Justice Studies (Criminal Justice), Political Science, and Public Safety Administration. The latter of these programs was recently renamed Public Safety and Health Administration and has experienced a growth in enrollment.

During academic years 2003, 2004 and 2005, the Department had 44 to 65 majors in Justice Studies, 33 to 46 majors in Public Safety Administration, and 13 to 14 majors in Political Science. During the same three-year period, there have been (cumulatively) 49 graduates in Justice Studies, 23 graduates in Political Science, and 63 graduates in Public Safety Administration.

All three majors were delivered using 4.5 full-time faculty positions. Another full-time faculty position was added in January 2006. It is expected that the use of adjunct faculty will decline as a result. Part-time/adjunct faculty has been mostly utilized in the Justice Studies program. The Department used part-time faculty in eleven classes during academic year 2003, 13 classes during academic year 2004, and seven classes during academic year 2005.

Planned and/or Implemented Changes Based on Program Review's Findings

- Deliver the required courses in these three majors using assorted distance learning delivery systems.
- Add a concentration in the Political Science major entitled Government Administration and Social Policy (currently before ACHE for review).
- Revisions of course contents and instructional material to improve identified learning weaknesses.
- Curricular revisions to address new skills reflective of actual job market conditions.
- Technology upgrades to enhance academic quality and student services.

² The Department was eliminated in 2006-07 and majors reassigned. The Department of Humanities and Social Sciences absorbed the Justice Studies (formerly Criminal Justice) and Political Science programs. A newly created Department of Health and Professional Studies absorbed the Public Health & Safety Administration program (formerly Public Safety Administration). All changes were reflected in the 2007-2008 Catalog.

b. College of Business (All Programs)

The program review involved a comprehensive self-assessment for reaffirmation of ACBSP accreditation. Major findings of this assessment show increasing student enrollment and revealed improvements throughout the programs in particular education access and faculty and teaching standards.

Table 1. College of Business -Graduates and Enrollment		
Academic Year	Graduates	# Enrolled (avg. 3 semesters)
2005-2006	243	748
2004-2005 223		657
2003-2004	219	637

Access to Education (Course Delivery-Formats)

One of the main program goals was to have all business majors available in a 100% on-line format. This goal was achieved in 2005. The College received high marks from the accreditation committee for its efforts to increase access through distance education.

Faculty and Teaching Standards

The College of Business met ACBSP accreditation standards requirements that at least 80% of the undergraduate credit hours in business are taught by doctoral or professionally qualified faculty and at least 40% of the undergraduate credit hours in business are taught by doctoral qualified faculty. Data shows that our fulltime and part-time faculty members produced 15,488 student credit hours in the study year. Doctoral and professionally qualified faculty members taught 13,487 student credit hours for a total of 87%. Credit hours sponsored by doctoral qualified faculty totaled 7,009, equaling 45% of the total.

Planned and/or Implemented Changes Based on Program Review's Findings

- Instruction delivery formats (i.e. addition of online and/or blended courses).
- Revisions of course contents and instructional material to improve identified learning weaknesses.
- Curricular revisions to address new skills reflective of actual job market conditions.
- Technology upgrades to enhance academic quality and student services.
- Professional development plans to better equip faculty and staff.
- Modification of assessment instruments to ensure valid and reliable measures of student learning

c. College of Education

Beginning in the fall of 2004, the College of Education began preparing for the Spring 2007 onsite visit by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) team. Two of the requirements for this visit were that an assessment system be in place and that three years of data at the candidate level, program level, and unit level (entire COE) were utilized to guide continuous improvement efforts.

A NCATE Board of Examiners Team conducted an onsite visit in March, 2007. Athens State University was notified in October, 2007 of the Accreditation Board's decision to continue the accreditation of the College of Education at the initial teacher preparation level. This accreditation decision indicates that the COE and its programs meet rigorous standards set forth by the professional education community. Only one area of improvement was noted: "Unit faculty involvement in scholarly activities is limited."

Planned and Implemented Changes Based on Program Review's Findings

The following plan was developed to address this area of improvement: The College of Education acknowledges that faculty must do more scholarly work, and plans have been put into place to insure that this will begin in the fall of 2007. Travel budgets have been expanded for the Fall 2007-2008 year, and faculty have been encouraged to propose presentations/submit publications for the new academic year.

Although the College of Education and the University as a whole have seen themselves as "teaching" institutions since their inception, it is time for the College of Education and the University to move forward and become more of a "teaching/research" institution as the addition of graduate programs is now a future goal.

3. Distance Learning (DL)

a. On-Line Course Delivery: Enrollment and Access

Table 2. Enrollment in Online Courses			
Term	Total Headcount	Taking at least 1 DL class	% of Total Enrollment
200610	2642	1430	54.13
200510	2576	794	30.82
% Change	2.56%	80.10%	75.60%

Table 3. Percentage of Semester Credit Hours Produced Through Electronic Delivery			
Internet	30.66%	Video/Telecourse	42%

Athens State continued to vigorously expand distance offerings to support the goal of increased educational access for Alabama citizens. Throughout 2006-07, continued efforts to improve and expand the use of the *Blackboard*® course management system and the *Tegrity*® content delivery system were undertaken. Furthermore, several programs volunteered to beta test other delivery systems, recently introduced in the market, for continuous enhancement of on-line offerings.

As projected, ASU added two new majors, Computer Information Systems and Religion, to the inventory of available fully on-line offerings. While academic programs look at the possibility of additional on-line course offerings, the University continues its efforts to secure state permission to utilize the blended method of course delivery in off-campus locations. This strategy will allow all colleges within the University to teach more programs completely on-line.

b. Quality Assessment of Distance Learning Courses

Distance learning activities comply with the SACS “Best Practices for Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs,” as well as standards set forth by accrediting bodies ACBSP (College of Business) and NCATE (College of Education).

Traditionally, the University has relied on indirect methods in the assessment of Distance Learning. These methods consist of student and faculty surveys capturing opinions and satisfaction with on-line courses. During 2006-07 academic programs began deliberation on ways to enhance the evaluation of learning outcomes through direct methods as part of the on-going efforts to enhance the assessment function throughout the University. Currently, academic programs are evaluating the use and implementation of pre and post test for specific disciplines to ensure that the transfer of knowledge through distance courses/programs is comparable to those delivered through traditional formats.

To assist academic programs in their evaluation of the quality of their on-line courses, OIPRA is coordinating the expanded use of institutional research in the evaluation of distance learning. This effort will include a series of studies that integrate learning objectives in cross-comparisons between traditional and electronically-delivered courses. Baseline data is expected by Fall 2008.

c. Professional Development of Faculty Teaching Distance Learning Courses

Consistent with institutional policy mandating training of faculty before being allowed to teach distance learning courses, the IT Division through its Instructional Technology Team scheduled several training modules aimed at the professional development of faculty teaching on-line courses.

Professional development opportunities included a variety of training workshops and individual training for faculty in the use of the *Blackboard®* and *Tegrity®* systems. This training also included information regarding effective online pedagogy. College Deans requested additional training for faculty and staff as needed.

4. Athens State University Library

The Library adopted a new three-year schedule for assessment:

Year One: Printed surveys, developed in-house and subject to regular revision by the Learning Resource Committee, are distributed to selected classes and to walk-in Library patrons. A slightly different instrument is posted online to survey Distance Learning students.

Year Two: Focus groups are conducted on-campus and at University centers to elicit in-depth reaction from students and faculty, based upon responses from the previous year's survey.

Year Three: The Library participates in the nationwide online LibQUAL+ survey, which allows benchmarking with other institutions and the establishment of norms.

In academic year 2006-07, the Library conducted the following assessment activities: focus groups in Fall 2006; LibQUAL+ in Spring 2007; evaluation of Library web page in Summer 2007.

Focus Groups

The Learning Resource Committee designed questions based on concerns and issues reported in the previous year's Library survey. Athens State's Coordinator of Institutional Assessment served as moderator. Two pilot groups were held to refine questions and time the process. Following the pilot testing, four focus groups were held, representing the following constituencies: students in Arts & Sciences, students in Business, students in Education at Wallace-Hanceville, and faculty members. Two additional groups were planned, but due to the repetition of responses the study was ended early.

Librarians shared focus group responses with members of the Learning Resource Committee. Library staff and the LRC discussed strategies to respond to each issue. Additional documentation of the focus group process may be found in the Library.

LibQUAL+

Athens State, along with many other institutions in the Network of Alabama Academic Libraries (NAAL) and nationwide, participated in LibQUAL+ during the month of April 2007. There were 310 Athens State respondents, consisting of 85% ASU students, 9.5% ASU faculty, 3% ASU staff, and 2.5% other types. For each item on the survey, respondents were asked to indicate a minimum satisfaction level, desired level, and perceived level. All responses fell within the acceptable range. Two areas—"a comfortable and inviting location" and "community space for group learning and group study"—rated above the desired level. The lowest rating was for the statement "the library helps me stay abreast of developments in my field(s) of interest."

Results were shared with the Learning Resource Committee, which requested that results be benchmarked against institutions of similar size and mission to Athens State. Dr. Herring conducted benchmarking analysis for twelve institutions, nine out-of-state and three in Alabama. Athens State compared favorably both in terms of number of respondents and in user satisfaction, with satisfaction scores near the highest in all categories. She found that Athens State's lowest score (the one pertaining to staying abreast of developments cited above) was also the lowest at the other institutions.

Comments were mostly positive. Areas of concern reported in the "Comments" section largely paralleled those from the focus group study.

Since the conclusion of the Library's own assessment, it was revealed at the annual NAAL meeting that Athens State's scores were higher than those for any other participating university library in the state. The Athens State Library Director was contacted by a librarian from the University of Maine because of Athens State's outstanding faculty satisfaction scores.

LibQUAL+ study results are available on the Library web site and in the Library.

Evaluation of Library Web Page

In Spring 2007 students enrolled in an advanced computer course (CIS 405) evaluated the usability of ASU Library's web page as a core project under the supervision of the faculty member of record. Results of the evaluation were shared with the Library. To respond to the suggestions, the ASU Library Director formed a committee consisting of librarians, the project's faculty sponsor, one participating student, the web services administrator, and the Dean of Arts and Sciences. A number of recommendations were made, spearheading a revision process.

Actions Taken in Response to Focus Groups, LibQUAL+, and Web Page Evaluation

As an outcome of the focus groups and LibQUAL+, the following improvements to Library services have been made:

- Purchased Central Search to address student difficulty in identifying appropriate resources
- Investigated current syllabi and contacted relevant faculty members, resulting in the purchase of new holdings in computer science and literature
- Purchased a new e-book collection
- Added DVDs to the collection
- Expanded Library instructional presence on the web page
- More aggressive promotion of Library orientation for new faculty
- Revised and digitized Library handouts for posting on web site
- Replaced library jargon on the web page with easier-to-understand descriptive words (e.g., “Find Articles” instead of “Electronic Databases”; “Find Books” instead of “Online Catalog”)
- Created descriptions for subscription electronic resources on the web page

The feedback was also useful in accelerating the timetable for the implementation of wireless capability in the Library building, and in installation of a proxy server to address student difficulty in accessing all resources from off-campus.

Librarians are working on implementing other changes based on assessment activities.

5. Program Viability (Non-Viable): Chemistry Program (CIPC 400501)

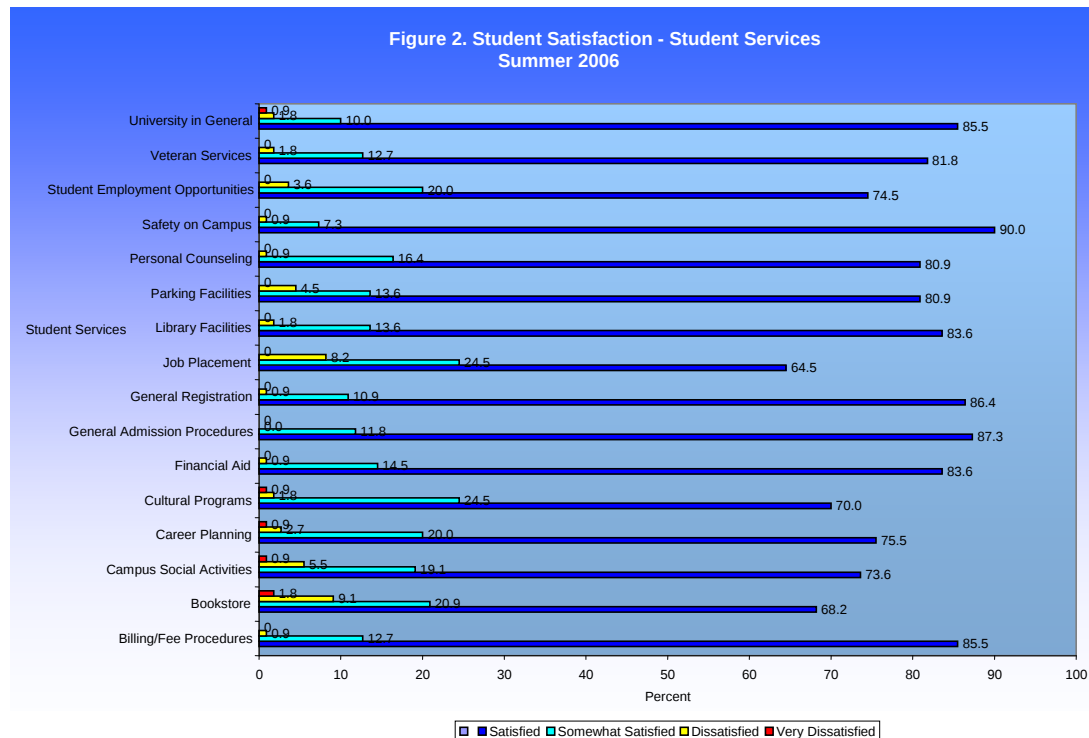
To improve the viability of the Chemistry program through increased enrollment, the University employed the following strategies:

- Developed an on-line brochure for the program as an aid to the recruitment of new students.
- Continued working towards strengthening the relationship with the main community college “feeder” institution by working on teacher “swap” programs and teaching classes at their institution.
- Continued to take advantage of the increase in demand for “highly qualified” teachers in various disciplines, particularly in the sciences, resulting from the *No Child Left Behind Act*, reaching out to teachers as they seek to improve and to enhance their credentials.

B. Student Support Functions

1. Student Services³

a. Overall Student Satisfaction



Note: Student Satisfaction data reported in the *2006-07 Institutional Management Plan Update* is based on reporting requirements of selective data from the Alabama College System. Consequently, some data elements are not included. The data reported above includes all elements measured through the Graduating Senior Exit Survey conducted in Summer 2006-07, the first term, where results have been reported in the new format required by the assessment system. The 2007-08 Institutional Effectiveness: Continuous Improvement Report will use results from the Spring Term, for a larger student representation.

b. Admissions and Records

The **Office of Admissions and Records** continued efforts to increase the availability of online services to distance learning students via ASU website. As a result, distance learning students have the capability to:

- View and download current catalogue and schedule information
- Make application on-line
- Register for current classes during set registration dates
- Copy/view and adjust schedule

³ Student satisfaction percentage is based on 110 student responses from the Summer 2006 Graduating Senior Exit Survey (Control Number: 1800-0400)

- Access, review, and print unofficial copies of their transcripts
- Review tuition and fee information
- Access and review current semester grades
- Access, download, complete and fax the following forms:
 - Transcript Request Forms
 - Readmission Form
 - Graduation Application
 - Scholarship Application
 - Drop Form
 - Transient Letter
 - Change of Major
 - Early Transfer Request Form
 - Special Instructional Request
 - Academic Bankruptcy
 - Change of Address
 - Directions for online registration
 - Directions for online transcript

The admission and records office is currently using the National Student Clearinghouse services for students to verify enrollment/degree status and transcript request. A search committee is in the process of hiring a full-time employee to assist with the evaluations of transfer credit and working with the optic filing system to image student records.

c. Counseling, Career (include Cooperative Education) and Disability Services

Counseling, Career, and Disability services continued to make inroads in expanding their services to all students via online capability as follows:

- Available services, job and cooperative education opportunities were disseminated via e-mail to students' web address.
- Interested students respond via email and are then emailed the necessary information and application procedures.
- All career and mental health information is available through the website (www.athens.edu/counseling). The link to Counseling contains contact information to Alabama's only licensed Distance Learning Counselor and connects to other National Mental Health websites. Special events such as Graduate School Seminars, Career Fairs, and ADA information are posted to the website.
- Services to students with disabilities who contacted Disability Support Services:
 - Total number of students served (various types of disability): 61 students (College of A&S=27 students; College of Business=21 students; College of Education=13 students).
 - Other Relevant Information:

Received degree August 2007	8
Projected to receive diploma, December, 2007	5
Stopped Out (stopped for 1-2 terms)	4
Dropped Out (have not attended for 3+ terms)	1

d. Student Activities

Consistent with the university-wide initiative of expanding student access to programs and services via online resources, **Student Activities** realized considerable improvement in the following areas:

- Increased student voting participation (all elections) from an average of 50 votes to over 600 votes (each election) by adding online voting capability.
- Improved dissemination of all student activities via ASU website, by listing all related information and e-mailing monthly reminder of up-coming events.

However, student participation in individual student activities/events remains a major challenge given the increasing proportion of commuter and online students.

e. Student Financial Services

Student Financial Services continued the leverage of new technology to provide 24/7 web-based financial aid information and services to current and prospective students without regard to their location. Financial Aid Information is provided through the catalog (both paper and electronic versions) and on ASU's website www.athens.edu. Office personnel provide information in the office, over the telephone, and through email correspondence. Improvements to current services concentrated in expanding the availability and accessibility of:

- Student-specific financial aid information via secure online access for current students (overall status, any applicable holds, view and accept awards, review aid award history, award payment schedules, and email the financial aid office for further assistance on a 24/7 basis).
- General financial aid information for prospective students and their families.

f. Transfer Advising Center (TAC)⁴

Through the establishment and implementation of the **Transfer Advising Center** in 2006, the University expects significant improvement to the transfer process for students from other colleges and universities. Expected accomplishments include:

- Early reach of students wishing to enroll in any college within the university to facilitate successful matriculation.
- Consistency in the evaluation and application of General Education Requirements.
- Increased efficiency of the transfer and registration process through a “one-stop” approach (from initial student contact for information to assignment of faculty advisors) using traditional and online capabilities from all related areas of the admissions, registration, and advising process.

⁴ Actual impact of the TAC in institutional effectiveness (transfer process) will be reported for 2007-08, the first year in which specific performance indicators will be measured under the new assessment standards.

g. Evening and Testing Services

Table 4. Testing Services Administered

2007 Month	MAT Tests	MAT Tutorials	Proctored Exams	Dantes Tests	CLEP Tests	Exit Bio Tests	Exit Chem Tests	Exit Math Tests	Exit CS/CIS Tests	Monthly Totals
Jan	11	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	14
Feb	12	1	2	1	3	0	0	0	0	19
March	20	0	5	0	1	0	0	0	0	26
April	17	1	4	3	2	0	1	2	1	31
May	17	1	0	2	7	0	0	0	0	27
June	21	0	4	2	5	0	0	0	0	32
July	20	0	4	1	2	0	0	0	0	27
Aug	18	0	6	0	6	0	0	0	1	31
Sept	15	1	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	21
Oct	11	0	6	1	7	0	0	1	1	27
Nov	19	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	26
Dec	12	1	8	0	1	1	0	1	1	25
Totals	193 6		41 11		45 1		1 4		4 30	6

C. Organization and Administration

1. Information Technology: University Operations and Instruction Delivery

a. Improvements to IT Infrastructure and Capabilities (operations)

Completed:

- Extended the local area network at Redstone Arsenal to include our other dedicated classroom/lab for Internet access and remote management.
- Added network connectivity for recently purchased buildings providing file and print sharing, Internet access, email, student information system access, and distant learning tools access.
- Established off-site hosted 24/7 support for distant learning tools issues.

Initiated:

- Upgrade local area network infrastructure to 1Gb.
- Upgrade Internet connectivity throughput to 10Mbps.
- Establish wireless Internet service for main campus.
- Setup off-site redundancy/backup for mission critical resources.
- Segment the main campus local area network for better traffic flow and efficiency.

b. Improvements to Instruction-related Infrastructure (Technology Resources)

The university made considerable investment in technology-related resources to improve instruction. Most significant improvements were:

- the global implementation of *Tegrity* software, where instructors use the application to create audio/video lessons to stream to their traditional lecture and distant learning students.
- the installation of *DriveShield* software in several of the labs to better manage, control, and protect the configuration settings of the student accessed computers, preventing unauthorized configuration changes and software installations on laboratory computers.
- the addition of Smart-Classroom hardware (computers, projectors, document cameras, WACOM tablet monitors, and associated mounts and wiring), providing Smart-Classroom technology for the rest of the traditional classrooms on campus.

2. Administrative Processes⁵

Continuous improvements of administrative processes were achieved throughout the University to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of day-to-day operations. Among others, new policies and procedures were developed, revised, or adopted in the areas of travel, purchasing, and property management. Better coordination with the IT Department resulted in enhanced capabilities for student registration and payment.

3. Physical Facilities

a. Planned and/or On-Going Improvements to Physical Facilities

Several construction or renovation projects are either in process or planned for the next two years as follows:

- Major renovations to McCandless Hall, Sanders Halls, Waters Hall, Brown Hall, and McCain Hall.
- On-going upgrades of campus lighting and safety systems.

4. External Affairs (University Relations):

a. Marketing and Communications

The Office of Vice President of University Relations, in coordination with academic programs and student support functional units implemented and or/planned various strategies to achieve enrollment goals:

- Focused advertising to specific students in the two year colleges.

⁵ With the implementation of the new institutional outcomes assessment system during 2007-08, administrative units will improve their capability to monitor, track, and report specific performance metrics for their respective functions as stated in their Annual Assessment Plan (AAP).

- Increased interaction with faculty and staff counterparts at community colleges.
- Increased access to ASU programs by putting more programs and courses on-line.
- Enhanced marketing through media and recruiting activities to increase awareness of ASU offerings.

b. Community Service/Outreach

Athens State University teamed with the Greater Limestone County Chamber of Commerce to conduct a study on the feasibility of establishing a convention center in Athens. The study was funded through a grant from the Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs to the Chamber. Faculty from the College of Business will lead the study and oversee the report.

c. Athens State University Foundation

During 2006-07, scholarship funds awarded by the Foundation totaled \$93,355.00. One hundred twenty-eight (128) scholarships were awarded out of 176 applications received. The average scholarship amount was \$729.00.

5. Office of Institutional Planning, Research, and Assessment (OIPRA)

a. Reorganization and Resources

The Office of Institutional Planning, Research, and Assessment (OIPRA) was reorganized in 2006. Under the authority of the Vice President of Academic Affairs, OIPRA has oversight responsibilities of assessment activities, institutional research, and strategic planning.

Given the multifunction nature of OIPRA, performance indicators have been expanded (beyond institutional research) and are being identified for each one of the three major functions of the office. A baseline will be established to track performance and data findings will be measured against OIPRA's target goals and objectives. Please see Appendix A for OIPRA's vision, mission, and goals.

OIPRA is heavily dependent on the effective and efficient use of IT capabilities related to data capture, analysis, storage, retrieval, dissemination and use of institutional information. To further the development of an integrated system to conduct planning, research and assessment, OIPRA began working closely with the IT Division to allocate resources needed to fulfill its duties.

Additional allocation of resources is being requested regarding office space, additional staff, SPSS licenses and office equipment.

b. Support Activities Conducted in 2006-07

In spite of the reorganization taking place as a result of expanded functions and responsibilities, and the major initiative of developing and implementing a coordinated assessment system, OIPRA continued to service the needs of academic and administrative programs for institutional data, and the reporting requirements from external organizations through a variety of activities.

➤ Reports and Studies

- Management Study: Analysis of Institutional Planning, Research, and Assessment Functions
- IPEDS
- PERS+
- Institutional Management Plan
- Fact Book
- Credit Hour Production Report
- DPE reports
- Fall Reports
- Tuition and Fee Schedule
- Space Data Report
- Annual Utilities Report
- FICA Survey
- Fall Enrollment
- Retirement Survey
- Facilities Master Plan & Facilities Inventory

➤ External Surveys

- College Board
- SESAC
- College Profile
- Title 3 and 5 Application for Waiver
- SACS Profile Survey
- Library Survey NCES
- Peterson's
- ACT Survey
- ACME Survey
- WIA
- BMI
- SACS Commission on Colleges Survey
- Library Survey ACRL
- US News Distance Learning
- Mkt Data Retrieval Survey
- US Dept of Education National Study of Students and Faculty

- **Internal Surveys** (Questionnaire Development/Statistical Analysis/Reporting)
 - Graduating Senior Exit Survey (200620, 200630, 200710, 200720, 200730)
 - Media Survey (200710)
 - Leading Edge Institute Survey (Independent)
 - Kerner-College of Business Survey
 - Point of Service Surveys for all Administrative/Support Functions
- **Ad hoc Requests for Institutional Data**
 - Fifty (50) internal requests for institutional data.
- **Administrative and Technical Assistance** (Strategic Planning & Assessment)
 - 2008-2012 Long Range Strategic Plan (University-wide)
 - 2007- 2008 Short Range Strategic Plan (University-wide)
 - Program Review-Department of Mathematics and Computer Science
 - Outcomes Assessment System Methods, Documents & Procedures
 - Moderated four focus groups for the Library (Learning Resources Committee)
- **Presentations and Training (Professional Development)**
 - ASU Outcomes Assessment System: Documenting Institutional Effectiveness
 - ASU Outcomes Assessment System: Phase I Implementation Status Report
 - ASU Outcomes Assessment System: Progress Report (In-Service)
 - Evaluating Online & Blended Learning in Higher Education (Faculty Workshop)

III. IMPROVEMENTS TO THE INSTITUTIONAL OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT PROCESS DURING ACADEMIC YEAR 2006-07⁶

A. Overview

Athens State University made significant advances towards a systematic, fully integrated outcomes assessment process during 2006-07. Although ASU has maintained an internal evaluation process of student learning and support services, the lack of a systematic approach to outcomes assessment hampered its ability to collect and use meaningful and substantive information on which to make decisions conducive to continuous improvement.

The on-going development of the *Athens State University Institutional Outcomes Assessment System* aims at eliminating inefficiencies in the assessment process, improving the quality of the information collected, and aligning the collection and use of information in program management and strategic planning.

To enhance the credibility of the process and to encourage maximum cooperation and participation from all sectors of the University, the President approved the *Athens State University Institutional Outcomes Assessment Policy* in January 2007. The policy mandates that all academic and administrative organizational units conduct and document assessment annually, specifies processes and timelines, and assigns responsibilities at different stages of the process. Please see Appendix B.

B. Design and Development of the ASU Institutional Outcomes Assessment System

In Fall 2006 OIPRA began development of the new institutional outcomes assessment system to better document Institutional Effectiveness (IE). Four elements guided the design and development of the system: 1.) Process Design (focus, content, methods and procedures), 2) Quality Control, 3) Schedules and Timelines, and 4) Documentation and Support.

⁶ Given the developmental stage of the new coordinated and systematic planning and assessment process during 2006-07, this section focuses on the progress achieved in completing pre-determined milestones of the process itself, rather than on the actual impact of assessment. Reported improvements during 2006-07 are based on implementation of and compliance with timeframes, procedures, standards, and documentation, typically found in system development projects. Upon the full implementation of the new assessment system scheduled for academic year 2007-08, future continuous improvement reports will reflect the actual impact of assessment on individual programs and overall institutional effectiveness.

In coordination with all academic and functional areas across the University, OIPRA developed a series of documents, procedures, and timelines to manage the assessment process. Existing documents were revised and updated to reflect the rigorous assessment standards being implemented and to facilitate integration of data findings in decision-making.

After serious consideration to cost and system specifications, the University decided to develop the information technology infrastructure to support assessment activities internally. Working closely with IT, OIPRA formulated the business processes (enterprise architecture) involved in conducting assessment activities in order to begin the development of the *Assessment Management Online System (AMOS)* and its companion the *Assessment Management Evaluator Entry (AMEE)*. Currently both AMOS and AMEE are in the development stage. The software program is expected to be fully operational by the end of 2007-08 with training of faculty and staff scheduled for early Fall 2008.

OIPRA continues to develop additional elements of the assessment system while monitoring closely its implementation. Taking advantage of “lessons learned” throughout the implementation and testing periods, modifications to processes and methods can be expected, before the entire system is fully in place by the end of 2007-08.

C. Status Report on the Implementation of Program Assessment During 2006-07

1. PHASE I⁷: Development, Submission, Review, and Approval of 2007-08 Annual Assessment Plan (AAP)

a. Development and Submission

OIPRA developed and distributed the 2007-08 AAP Guidelines and sample plans to all academic and administrative units and worked closely with faculty and staff providing administrative and technical assistance in the development of the AAP.

Taking advantage of the AAP development process, all academic programs and administrative/support units assessed their impact on institutional effectiveness and engaged in a thorough review of their respective program purpose to reflect current and/or future circumstances consistent with the mission and goals of the University. Based on functional responsibilities, objectives were formulated and performance indicators were identified and translated into expected outcomes (metrics). Formal and comprehensive planning of assessment activities was carried out, including the development of new assessment instruments and the revision of existing ones to accommodate the new assessment standards. Table 5 presents a detailed list of individual programs and organizational units submitting an annual assessment plan.

⁷ Based on the Parallel Approach integrated in the assessment process, academic year 2006-07 constitutes the planning period for conducting assessment in 2007-08. Please see Figure 3 in Appendix C.

Table 5. ORGANIZATIONS CONDUCTING ASSESSMENT BY PROGRAM FUNCTION

Organization	Program Function			
	Academic Program	Academic Support	Non Academic-Student Support	Administrative
Office of VP-Academic Affairs (N=29)				
College of Arts & Sciences				
Department of Behavioral Sciences (n=3)				
Behavioral Sciences (BS)	X			
Psychology (BS/BA)	X			
Sociology (BS/BA)	X			
Department of Health & Professional Studies (n=3)				
Health & Wellness Management (BS)	X			
Health Science (BS)	X			
Public Safety & Health Administration (BS)	X			
Department of Humanities & Social Sciences (n=7)				
Art (BA)	X			
English (BA/BSEd)	X			
History (BA/BSEd)	X			
Justice Studies (BS)	X			
Political Science (BS)	X			
Religion (BA)	X			
Social Science (BS)	X			
Interdisciplinary (N=1)				
Liberal Studies (BS)	X			
Department of Mathematics & Computer Science (n=3)				
Mathematics (BS/BSEd)	X			
Math Lab		X		
Computer Science (BS)	X			
Department of Natural Sciences (n=3)				
Biology (BS/BSEd)	X			
Chemistry (BS/BSEd)	X			
General Science (BS/BSEd)	X			
College of Business (n=1) (BS)	X			
College of Education (n=2) (BSEd)	X			
Science in Motion		X		
Institutional Planning, Research & Assessment				X
Library		X		
Distance Learning		X		
Academic Advising		X		
Off-Campus Sites				X
Writing Lab		X		
Office of VP-Financial Affairs (N=6)				
Auxiliary Services				X
Business Office				X
Campus Security				X
Human Resources				X
Information Technology		X		X
Physical Plant				X
Office of VP-Student Affairs (N=11)				
Admissions & Records			X	
Counseling and Career Services			X	
Disability Services			X	
Printing & Publications				X
Recruitment			X	
Student Financial Services			X	
Student Activities			X	
Testing & Evening Services			X	
Transfer Advising Center			X	
Veterans Affairs			X	
Office of VP-University Relations (N=3)				
Alumni Affairs				X
ASU Foundation				X
Public Relations				X
GRAND TOTAL (N=49)	21	6	10	12

Table 6: Status of 2007-08 AAP by Organization

Organization	Identified for IE	Developed	Under Development	Submitted
Office of VP Academic Affairs	29	23	6	23
Office of VP Financial Affairs	6	6		6
Office of VP Student Affairs	11	11		11
Office of VP University Relations	3	3		3
Total	49	43	6 ⁽¹⁾	43

⁽¹⁾ Academic Advising (Faculty); Distance Learning; Off-Campus Sites (University Centers); Office of Planning, Research and Assessment; Science in Motion; and Writing Laboratory.

Table 7. Status of 2007-08 AAP by Program Function

Program Function	Identified for IE	Developed	Under Development	Submitted
Academic Programs (Curricular)	21	21		21
Academic Support	6	2	4	2
Non Academic Student Support	10	10		10
Administrative	12	10	2	10
Total	49	43	6	43

b. Quality Assurance of Assessment Methodology

Following the quality control mechanism stipulated in the newly approved university assessment policy, the development, review, and approval of the 2007-08 AAPs underwent the scrutiny of faculty and staff at two separate organizational levels in the process:

Internal Review Committees (IRC): Academic and administrative head officers appointed faculty and staff to begin development and review of the 2007-08 Annual Assessment Plan for each organizational unit in January 2007.

Institutional Assessment Committee (IAC): The President appointed the eight members of the IAC in May 2007. The committee met several times throughout Summer 2007 and completed the review and approval of the 2007-08 AAP. See Appendix D for a copy of the IAC charter.

Preliminary evidence suggests that most programs initially benefited from the systematic approach to assessment stipulated in the policy, although further improvements are needed.

Academic programs, with varied levels of experience conducting systematic assessment, concentrated on identifying specific learning outcomes suitable to their respective discipline, while integrating universal skills (i.e. communication, technology proficiency) applicable to all college graduates. Capstone courses in several disciplines were added to the curriculum as a result of the formal process of planning assessment activities. Although all programs were encouraged to develop some sort of course mapping based on the specific skill(s) being measured, many did not, but rather chose to use all courses in the curriculum.

New assessment instruments were developed including scoring rubrics, exit exams, and student portfolios. Indirect methods of assessment (typically, university-wide instruments such as the Faculty Course Evaluations (FCES) and the Graduating Senior Exit Survey (GSES) were revised to accommodate the new assessment standards and facilitate data comparisons. A student self-assessment of entering and exiting competencies was added to the GSES.

For most administrative and support units that never before had conducted formal assessments, the process encouraged a broader view of their respective function and their impact on institutional effectiveness. As a result, target outcomes focused on two areas: program operations (effectiveness) and service delivery (efficiency). As with academic programs, new assessment instruments were developed including Point of Service (POS) surveys and the revised GSES.

c. Institutional Assessment Committee: Review, Evaluation, and Approval.

The committee reviewed and evaluated forty-three Annual Assessment Plans from both academic and administrative organizational units using 25 criteria items. Revision requests ranged from minor changes related to editorial content and format to more complex changes requiring modifications of assessment methodology.

The following tables summarize the development, submission, review and approval of the 2007-08 Annual Assessment Plans by the Institutional Assessment Committee.

TABLE 8. 2007-08 AAP DEVELOPMENT, SUBMISSION, REVIEW AND APPROVAL BY ORGANIZATION

Organization	Identified for IE	Developed	Under Development	Submitted	Reviewed	Approved as Initially Submitted	Approved w/ Conditions		Approved after revisions
							Minor Rev	Other Revisions	
Off VP Academic Affairs	29	23	6	23	23	12	4	7	23
Off VP Financial Affairs	6	6		6	6	3	2	1	6
Off VP Student Affairs	11	11		11	11	9		2	11
Off VP University Relations	3	3		3	3	3			3
Total	49	43	6	43	43	27	6	10	43
Submission Rate (%)				86					

TABLE 9. 2007-08 AAP DEVELOPMENT, SUBMISSION, REVIEW AND APPROVAL BY FUNCTION

Organization	Identified for IE	Developed	Under Development	Submitted	Reviewed	Approved as Initially Submitted	Approved w/ Conditions		Approved after revisions
							Minor Rev	Other Revisions	
Academic Programs (Curricular)	21	21		21	21	11	4	6	21
Academic Support	6	2	4	2	2	1		1	2
Non Academic Student Support	10	10		10	10	8		2	10
Administrative	12	10	2	10	10	7	2	1	10
Total	49	43	6	43	43	27	6	10	43

TABLE 10. 2007-08 AAP APPROVALS (IAC) –SUMMER 2007

Program Function	Approved as Initially Submitted ^(a)		Approved w/ Conditions ^(b)				Approved after revisions	
			Minor Revisions		Other Revisions			
Academic Programs (Curricular)	11	52.4%	4	19.0%	6	14.0%	21	48.8%
Academic Support	1	50.0%			1	2.3%	2	4.7%
Non Academic Student Support	8	80.0%			2	4.7%	10	23.3%
Administrative	7	70.0%	2	20.0%	1	2.3%	10	23.3%
Total (As % of Total Submissions)	27	62.8%	6	14.0%	10	23.3%	43	100.0%

^(a) % based on total submissions for individual program classification.

^(b) % based on total number of conditional approvals

Although the impact of the newly established assessment process in the University's continuous improvement efforts cannot be fully documented until at least the end of 2007-08, the Committee found both strengths and weaknesses in the content of the AAPs.

Preliminary evidence suggests that most programs benefited from the systematic approach to assessment stipulated in the policy. With few exceptions, each program developed its own assessment process and protocol as well as a variety of data collection tools that included direct and indirect methods of measurement. However, further improvements in the formulation of objectives and outcomes and in assessment methodology are needed for various programs.

As the University continues its implementation of a systematic assessment process and programs gain further experience in the formulation and evaluation of target outcomes, further improvements are expected. A more detailed analysis of the overall assessment process and its impact on institutional effectiveness will be reported in the 2007-08 Continuous Improvement Report.

APPENDIX A

Office of Institutional Planning, Research, and Assessment

Vision:

In three years, through careful coordination and expanded use of information technology capabilities, OIPRA will be a fully operational “**knowledge management center**” supporting a data-driven, performance-based environment for strategic planning and decision-making to meet University goals. The Office will operate as a centralized service-oriented provider of analytical support for academic and administrative units, and a clearinghouse for timely reporting and disseminating of accurate and reliable institutional data.

Mission:

The primary mission of OIPRA is to support institutional decision-making for strategic planning, continuous improvement, and accreditation through the systematic collection, analysis, evaluation, and dissemination of valid and reliable data. To accomplish its mission OIPRA:

- conducts a centralized fully-integrated university-wide planning, research, and assessment process;
- provides information and technical expertise to assist academic and non-academic units at all levels in the formulation, measurement, tracking, and reporting of performance (expected outcomes) indicators and metrics;
- accumulates, generates, maintains, and disseminates institutional and benchmarking information (data) to support assessment of institutional effectiveness; and
- initiates surveys and other performance-based studies to facilitate planning and continuous improvement of academic and non-academic programs and support functions.

Goals:

1. Enhance the accountability of the institutional planning, research and assessment process through the development and implementation of a systematic process to conduct program reviews, develop and implement workable assessment plans, collect assessment and institutional data, and integrate data findings into strategic planning.
2. Improve ASU ability to determine its overall institutional effectiveness on an annual basis as the foundation for continuous improvement.
3. Encourage a culture of assessment and adoption of best practices at all levels of the institution while serving as a comprehensive information resource.

APPENDIX B

ATHENS STATE UNIVERSITY

Institutional Outcomes Assessment Policy Statement

This document details the institutional policy that will guide outcomes assessment at Athens State University starting in academic year 2007-08 and thereafter. The policy has been developed as a result of the establishment of the Office of Institutional Assessment (OIA) and the development and implementation of a systematic and coordinated process for outcomes assessment throughout the University approved by the President on the 21st day of December 2006.

Athens State University seeks to comply with all assessment requirements mandated by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), the Department of Post-secondary Education of the Alabama College System, and other pertinent accrediting and regulatory organizations.

This policy statement consists of three parts:

- Purpose and Definition of Outcomes Assessment
- Guiding Principles of Outcomes Assessment
- Outcomes Assessment Process

PURPOSE AND DEFINITION OF OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

To ensure that all programs operate within a manner consistent with its Mission, Athens State University maintains an internal evaluation system, where on-going assessment of student learning and support services provides the foundation for continuous improvement to sustain and enhance academic quality and the student educational experience.

Although the assessment of student outcomes is primarily directed to outcomes in academic programs, the University recognizes that the educational experience involves more than just courses. Therefore, the process of outcomes assessment includes both program and co-curricular (support services) elements. Outcomes assessment constitutes a primary input to the overall strategic planning process.

Outcomes Assessment, as the term is used at Athens State University, refers to the systematic process of gathering, interpreting, and acting upon data related to student learning and experience for the purposes of course and program improvement. The process is ongoing and adaptive and constitutes the foundation upon which program decisions are made. Assessment is neither a review of faculty or staff performance nor an

end in itself, but rather one of many evaluative mechanisms that helps the University effect change.

The assessment process at Athens State University focuses on the need to answer five fundamental questions:

- What should graduates of our programs know or be able to do as a result of going through our curriculum?
- How well are they learning?
- How will the University know?
- How can student learning or our curriculum be improved?
- How can the overall institutional environment be enhanced to optimize the educational experience of students and faculty?

The University subscribes to the principle that individual academic and support units are best suited to determine how to assess student learning and educational experience outcomes and how to use assessment results for program improvement. Therefore, it follows a coordinated and systematic though decentralized approach with specific units responsible for assessing specific academic and support programs, all reporting findings annually to the Office of Institutional Assessment.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

Outcomes assessment at Athens State University is guided by the following principles:

- Outcome assessment is a goal-directed process focused on quality assurance and continuous improvement of teaching, learning and the overall educational experience.
- Assessment procedures should encourage learning and not simply measure it.
- Assessment will be clearly and appropriately aligned with outcomes and should optimally include direct and indirect methods of student learning and service delivery.
- Assessment requirements should be fiscally responsible and should not impose unnecessary time-consuming burdens.
- Assessment findings should be viewed positively as an opportunity and are not intended as basis for punitive decisions of any kind.
- Faculty and staff leadership, commitment, and collaboration are vital to a sound and effective assessment process.
- Student learning is the primary responsibility of the student, even though teaching is a major element of assessment.
- Data collected through assessment should be governed by data quality standards, and by codes of ethics relating to research practices of human subjects and privacy laws.
- Open communication and discussion of assessment findings among faculty and staff is vital to the enhancement of institutional effectiveness.

OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Procedure Steps and Timeframe

Athens State University's student outcomes assessment consists of three steps:

- Development of the Annual Assessment Plan (AAP) for each academic program and support service unit using standardized format containing the following components: Mission Statement; Program Purpose/Goals; Objectives and Expected Outcomes; Procedures, Methods, and Measurement Criteria; Implementation Plan; Use of Assessment Results; Communication of Results; and Action Plan.

Submission Deadline: Late Spring Semester **[April 15]** (for the next academic year-2007-08 and every year thereafter)

- Collection and analysis of outcome data. (Throughout the academic year)
- Development of the Annual Assessment Report (AAR) for each academic program and support service unit using standardized format containing the following components: Summary Statement, Assessment Findings and Resulting Actions (Narrative), and Action Plan.

Submission Deadline: Early Fall **[September 15]** (starting with results from academic year 2007-08 and every year thereafter)

Note: Annual Assessment Plans and Annual Assessment Reports are not official until cleared by the Office of Institutional Assessment for compliance with accreditation standards.

Roles and Responsibilities

Athens State University requires that all academic and support programs conduct annual outcomes assessment. Each program unit is required to have an Annual Assessment Plan (AAP) and Annual Assessment Report (AAR) on file with the Office of Institutional Assessment. Assessment instruments at the department and/or administrative unit level must be identified and submitted to OIA for inventory and coding for identification.

Faculty

In conjunction with guidelines published by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, the University requires faculty to establish learning objectives for all degree programs and develop department annual assessment plans for evaluating the extent to which students are achieving the objectives. The faculty and staff in all units must review their goals and assessment plans every year in conjunction with the catalog cycle, and must report annual assessment findings and resulting action plans to Department Chairs.

Deans and Department Chairs (Academic Units)

College Deans must maintain an appropriate system for managing the overall college assessment efforts. Such system must ensure that assessment plans are developed, filed in OIA, and carried out; that results are documented and shared with the faculty for potential action; and that decisions based on assessment data are documented in each one of the units' annual assessment reports. College Deans must designate a faculty or staff member (at their discretion) to serve as their College Assessment Point of Contact. This person will be responsible for entering into the ASU Assessment Tracking System all AAPs and AARs for all departments in the college and for the routing of such documents for reviews and approvals at each level.

Department Chairs (or college deans as appropriate) must maintain an appropriate system for managing unit assessment efforts. Department Chairs review and approve their unit's annual assessment plan and assessment report and submit to the College Dean, which upon review and approval officially submits all documentation to the Office of Institutional Assessment. Chairs and Deans may choose to delegate approval authority at their respective level.

Vice Presidents and Heads of Administrative Service Units (Administrative Units)

Vice Presidents must maintain an appropriate system for managing the overall assessment efforts for all pertinent administrative units/services under their authority. Such system must ensure that assessment plans are developed, filed in OIA, and carried out; that results are documented and shared with the respective staff for potential action; and that decisions based on assessment data are documented in each one of the units' annual assessment reports. Each Vice President, at his/her discretion, must designate a staff member in each of the administrative units under its authority to serve as their Administrative Assessment Point of Contact. This person will be responsible for entering into the ASU Assessment Tracking System all AAPs and AARs for all units under the Vice President and for the routing of such documents for reviews and approvals at each level.

Heads of administrative units (or VPs as appropriate) must maintain an appropriate system for managing unit assessment efforts. These officials review and approve their unit's annual assessment plan and assessment report and submit to the respective Vice President who, upon review and approval, officially submits all documentation to the Office of Institutional Assessment. Vice Presidents and Unit Heads may choose to delegate approval authority at their respective level.

Institutional Assessment Committee

The Institutional Assessment Committee (IAC) consists of 8 faculty and staff members representing academic and administrative programs appointed by the President on a 3-year term basis. The Coordinator of Institutional Assessment and the Accreditation Liaison Officer serve as ex-officio members of the Committee providing guidance and support. The 8-member composition include three faculty members (one from each one

of the Colleges), two staff members from student support services, one staff member from the Library, and two staff members from Information Technology (IT) Services representing both academic and administrative IT support areas.

The role of the IAC is to provide quality assurance for ASU's institutional effectiveness process through the review and evaluation of Annual Assessment Plans (AAP) and Annual Assessment Reports (AAR). The committee meets no less than twice a year typically during early summer (June) and early fall (September) based on the assessment cycle.

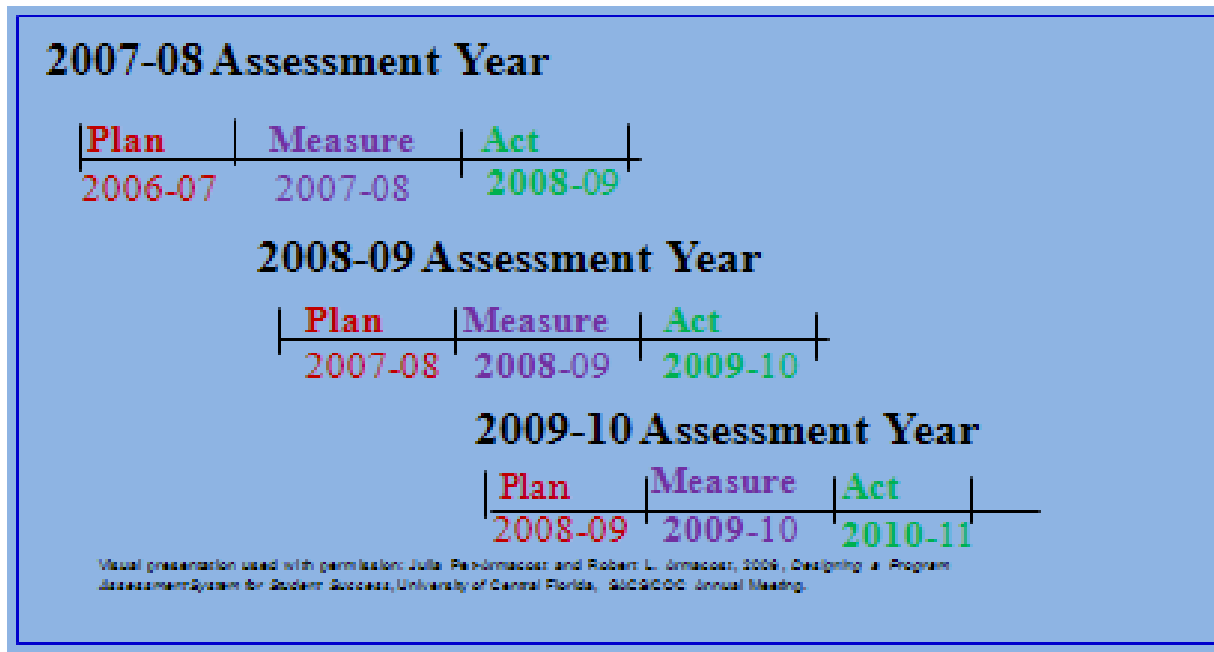
Office of Vice President of Academic Affairs/Office of Institutional Assessment (OIA)

The administration's role, through the Office of Institutional Assessment, is to coordinate, validate, and document assessment activities taking place at the unit level, to provide technical assistance and support in the development and formulation of assessment methodology, as well as to conduct surveys and studies and provide data of institutional scope.

The Office of Institutional Assessment oversees the ASU Assessment Tracking System, a secured centrally maintained electronic master database of academic and administrative outcome assessment information. Upon submission of assessment plans and reports by College Deans/Vice Presidents (or their designee), OIA, working jointly with the IAC, reviews each assessment plan and report for appropriateness and compliance. OIA reserves the right to consult with the deans, vice presidents and/or department chairs or unit heads (as appropriate) to ensure the most successful presentation of results. Upon completion of the review process, OIA will assign a status of "Received by OIA" to document program compliance with the annual assessment cycle.

Appendix C

Figure 3. Parallel Approach



PHASE I	PHASE II	PHASE III
Development, Submission, Review, and Approval of Annual Assessment Plan (Spring Semester)	Implementation of AAP- Data Collection and Analysis (t/o Academic Year)	Development, Submission, Review, and Approval of Annual Assessment Report (Findings) and Action Plan (Early Fall Semester)
- Internal Review Committees (IRC): Academic and administrative head officers appoint faculty and staff to begin development of the [next year] Annual Assessment Plan (AAP). - Academic and administrative programs submit AAP to OIPRA. (April 15th.) - Institutional Assessment Committee (IAC): The President appoints the eight members of the IAC, who review, evaluate, and approve AAP. (July 31st.)	- Assessment instruments are applied as scheduled. - Assessment data is collected - Data analysis is conducted. - Findings are obtained.	- Internal Review Committees (IRC): Faculty and staff begin development of the [year ended] Annual Assessment Report (AAR). - Action Plan (AP) is developed based on findings - Academic and administrative programs submit AAR and AP to OIPRA. (Sept 15th.) - Institutional Assessment Committee (IAC) reviews, evaluates, and approves AAR and AP. (October 31st.)

APPENDIX D

Charter of the Institutional Assessment Committee

(Excerpted from the ASU Institutional Outcomes Assessment Policy Statement)

Institutional Assessment Committee

The Institutional Assessment Committee (IAC) consists of 8 faculty and staff members representing academic and administrative programs appointed by the President on a 3-year term basis. The Coordinator of Institutional Assessment and the Accreditation Liaison Officer serve as ex-officio members of the Committee providing guidance and support. The 8-member composition include three faculty members (one from each one of the Colleges), two staff members from student support services, one staff member from the Library, and two staff members from Information Technology (IT) Services representing both academic and administrative IT support areas.

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